



File Code: 1950
Date: November 7, 2018

Dear Reviewer,

The Forest Service proposes the Ellis Integrated Vegetation Project (Ellis Project) on the Heppner and North Fork John Day Ranger Districts of the Umatilla National Forest. This project is being developed to enhance landscape resiliency by creating and maintaining heterogeneous vegetative conditions at both stand and landscape scales. The project is located about 15 miles southeast of Heppner and 7 miles west of Ukiah, Oregon in Morrow, Umatilla, and Grant Counties. Private land accounts for approximately 4,626 acres within the project boundary. Approximately 110,000 acres may be considered for treatment on National Forest System lands.

The following treatments are being considered to meet the purpose and need of the project: commercial thinning; small diameter thinning; mechanical fuels treatments; pile, jackpot, and landscape burning; pruning; planting of native vegetation; and placement of large wood in meadow streams. These proposed activities are intended to achieve the following goals: reduce the risk of uncharacteristic wildfire; enhance unique vegetative communities; provide well-distributed, high quality wildlife habitat; aid in protecting values at risk; promote the health and safety of the public and firefighters; and contribute to social, cultural, and economic needs. Proposal information is also available on Umatilla National Forest's project webpage at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=41350>.

Would you like to make comments on this project?

This project is subject to comment pursuant to 36 CFR 218, Subparts A and B. The scoping comment period for the project proposal will run for 60 days from the date the legal notice of the opportunity to comment is published in the *East Oregonian*. The project proposal is anticipated to be released on November 5, 2018. Based on the anticipated publication date the Forest Service will be accepting comments on the proposal until January 4, 2019. The actual publication date is the exclusive means for calculating the comment period. Commenters should not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by any other source. It is the commenter's responsibility to ensure timely receipt of comments (36 CFR 218.25). Only those who submit timely project-specific written comments during a public comment period are eligible to file an objection; therefore it is important to us that reviewers provide their comments by the deadline and in such a manner that those comments can be used for the agency's preparation of the Environmental Impact Statement.

Comments on the proposal may be submitted electronically on the Umatilla National Forest's project webpage (link above) by selecting the "Comment on Project" link in the "Get Connected" group at the right hand side of the project webpage. Include the project name in the subject line. Attachments may be in the following formats: plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), Word (.doc, .docx), or portable document format (.pdf).

Written comments can be submitted by fax 541-676-2105; mailed to Brandon Houck, ATTN: Leslie Taylor, P.O. Box 7, Heppner, Oregon 97836; or hand-delivered (117 S. Main Street, Heppner, Oregon 97836) during normal business hours (8am to 4:30pm Monday-Friday,



excluding holidays). For oral comments or more project information contact environmental coordinator Leslie Taylor at 541-427-5324 or ldtaylor@fs.fed.us.

In order for reference material to be considered, commenters should supply referenced literature and discuss its relevancy to the project as part of their comments. Individuals or representatives of an entity submitting comments must sign the comments or verify identity upon request. Comments received, including the names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record on this proposal and will be available for public inspection (40 CFR 1501.7 and 1508.22; Forest Service Handbook 1909.15, Section 21).

Your scoping comments will help our interdisciplinary team refine the proposal; identify gaps in our analysis; and develop effective, issue-driven alternatives and project design criteria. Thank you for your interest in this project and we look forward to working with you in developing alternatives for the proposed Ellis Project.

Sincerely,



BRANDON HOUCK
Heppner District Ranger



PAULA GUENTHER
North Fork John Day District Ranger